

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection  
New Jersey Administrative Code  
Title 7, Chapter 1E

Subchapter 10

**Treatment of Confidential Information**

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**7:1E-10.1 Nondisclosure of confidential information**

Unless specifically required by any Federal or State law, regulation or order, court order, or applicable court rule, the Department shall not disclose confidential information to any person other than as provided in N.J.A.C. 7:1E-9.

**7:1E-10.2 Safeguarding of confidential information**

(a) Submissions to the Department required under this chapter will be opened only by persons authorized by the Department to be engaged in administering this chapter.

(b) Only those Department employees whose activities necessitate access to information for which a confidentiality claim has been made may open any envelope which is marked "CONFIDENTIAL".

(c) The Department shall store any records containing confidential information only in locked cabinets in secure rooms; provided, however, that if such records are in a form which is not amenable to such storage, the Department shall store such records in a manner which similarly restricts access by persons to whom disclosure of the confidential information in question is restricted.

(d) Any records made, possessed, or controlled by the Department or its contractors, and containing confidential information, shall contain indicators identifying the confidential information.

(e) Every Department employee, representative, and contractor who has custody or

possession of confidential information shall take appropriate measures to safeguard such information and to protect against its improper disclosure.

### **7:1E-10.3 Confidentiality agreements**

The provisions of this chapter shall supersede the provisions of any agreement imposing any duties of confidentiality or nondisclosure upon the Department or any employee, contractor or agent thereof. Such provisions imposing confidentiality or nondisclosure duties upon the Department or any employee, contractor or agent thereof shall be of no force or effect.

### **7:1E-10.4 Wrongful access or disclosure; penalties**

(a) No person shall disclose, obtain or have possession of any confidential information, except as authorized by this chapter.

(b) Except in accordance with this chapter, no Department employee, representative, or contractor shall disclose any confidential information which came into his or her possession, or to which he or she gained access, by virtue of his or her official position of employment or contractual relationship with the Department. No such person shall use any such information for his or her private gain or advantage, except as permitted by a contract between such person and the Department. If a contractor discloses confidential information in violation of this chapter or of contractual provisions restricting disclosure, such disclosure shall constitute grounds for debarment or suspension as provided in N.J.A.C. 7:1-5, Debarment, Suspension and Disqualification from Department Contracting.

(c) If the Department finds that any person has violated the provisions of this subchapter, it may:

1. Commence civil action in Superior Court for a restraining order and an injunction barring that person from further disclosing confidential information; and/or

2. Pursue any other remedy available at law or equity.

(d) In addition to any other penalty that may be sought by the Department, violation of this subchapter by a Department employee shall constitute grounds for dismissal, suspension, fine or other adverse personnel action.

(e) Use of any of the remedies specified under this section shall not preclude the use of any other remedy.